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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

Meditsinskiy Rabotnik, No 48, 1949

Soviet public health is one of the most important contributory factors to the rapid progress and development of Soviet industry and the national economy. As a result of the unification of hospitals and polyclinics, the various medical workers and activities of the Soviet Union have been able to coordinate theoretical medical scientific research and practical requirements to a degree never attained by capitalist countries. On the whole, there has been a general and noticeable improvement in the quality of medical aid afforded the peoples of the USSR.

However, we should not curtail our efforts and rest upon our laurels. Much remains to be done. In the first place, the organization of therapeutic and prophylactic institutions must be improved. It has been found out that many medical activities are not organized to permit optimum service to the national economy. The existence of a ponderous and disorganized network of small therapeutic and prophylactic units presents serious problems for assignment of personnel, supervision of these activities, and proper supply of necessary equipment. On the other hand, there are instances of medical organizations going to the other extreme, i.e., following the letter of the law so closely that they are unable to serve the population satisfactorily.

Much has been said about the benefits of the hospital and polyclinic unification program. Not much has been said about the faults of this program. It now appears that in some localities the program has been so zealously carried out that certain specialized services are available beyond all need while at the same time there are critical shortages of other specialized services. Frequently, the unification program has led to the complete elimination of hospitals which had a well-balanced table of organization in the various specialties. This unification program, whose main objective was to consolidate the far-flung organization of medical activities has been progressing slowly in many regions, thus making it difficult for the central supervisory authorities to initiate standard plans for the network.

- 1 -

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This slow reply to the unification program is not limited to the mountain regions of some of the republics, but actually exists in some of the largest cities of Azerbaydzhan and Kirgiz. A survey has revealed that the reasons behind the unification program are not understood by medical authorities in Gor'kiy and Ul'yanov oblasts, with the result that the Ministry of Public Health RSFSR, has had to send a special commission into these districts to instruct the authorities in the reasons behind unification.

The reasons for the unification and tightening of the medical network organization should be obvious to any sensible person. Therefore, it is urgently requested that the ministry's decree for such a program be carried out expeditiously.

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- 2 -

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